(b) and (c) Interim rewards has been paid to all eligible informers. As per existing rules, final reward is to be given only on finalisation of all proceedings, including assessments and appeals, etc. and after the additional taxes attributable to the information furnished by the informer have been realised. Many of the assessments pertaining to the aforesaid cases have not yet become final and/or taxes not recovered. Therefore, there cannot be any definite time frame for the disbursal of such reward. However, the Central Board of Direct Taxes has, from time to time, issued instructions to subordinate authorities for early disposal of such assessments and quick disbursal of reward to informants.

PIB clearance to RCFL Projects

4307. SHRI GOVINDRAO ADIK: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Rashtriya Chemicals and Fertilisers Limited (RCFL) have sought clearance from the Public Investment Board (PIB) for their new projects/ expansion of capacity/modernisation, etc.;

(b) if so, details of proposals/projects submitted by the RCFL for obtaining clearance from the Board during 1996-97;

(c) the details of action taken and proposals cleared during 1996-97; and

(d) the present status of the proposals submitted by the RCFL and pending with the Board?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR): (a) to (d) No proposals of Rashtriya Chemicals and Fertilisers are pending consideration by the Public Investment Board (PIB). However, one proposal relating to a Joint Venture project of RCFL—Oman—India Fertiliser Project has been received from the Department of Fertilisers. This project will be considered by the Committee of Public Investment Board for first stage clearance in its meeting scheduled for 14.5.1997.

ATM facility in SBI Branches

4308. PROF. RAM KAPSE: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the branches of State Bank of India where ATM facility has been installed, in view of the competition offered by multinational banks;

(b) the target set for the next three years;

(c) whether the Parliament House/ Annexe branches are also likely to be provided the ATM facility in the near future; and

(d) if so, by when and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINACE (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR): (a) State Bank of India (SBI) have reported that ATMs have been installed at their following 15 branches:

1. Bangalore Main Branch (MB) (S Marks's Road), Bangalore.
2. Bhopal MB (TT Nagar), Bhopal.
3. Bhubaneswar MB, Bhubaneswar.
4. Ballygunge, Calcutta.
5. Chandigarh MB, Chandigarh.
6. Mylapore, Channai,
7. Hyderabad MB, Hyderabad.
8. Ashok Marg, Lucknow.
9. New Delhi, MB, New Delhi.
10. Patna MB, Patna.
11. Jamshedpur.
12. Madame Cama Road, Mumbai.
13. Opera House, Mumbai
14. Goregaon (West), Mumbai.
15. Evershine Nagar, Mumbai.

(b) While normally only yearly targets are fixed and reviewed annually, SBI proposes to set up approximately 40 ATMs during the next 3 years.

(c) and (d) The Parliament House Annexe (Sansidya Soudh Branch) of SBI

has already been identified for provision of ATM facility. the site preparation is complete and the order for ATM has already been,placed with the vendor. The deliveries are expected within 2 months. The ATM would be operationalised by SBI on delivery of the ATM by the vendor.

Representation for raising exemption limit of income tax

4309. SHRI BANGARU LAXMAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of Members of Parliament have represented for raising the exemption limit of income tax in view of the high rise in prices in the country; and

(b) if so, the action taken or proposed to be taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The decision of the Government is reflected in the Finance Bill, 1997.

Proposal for forward trading of Gold and Silver

4310. SHRI BANGARU LAXMAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Bullion Merchants' Associations has urged Government to allow forward trading of Gold and Silver in the country to curb price fluctuations and smuggling;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the bullion exchange system throughout the country was closed down in 1963 under the policy of Gold Control Order; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the action proposed to be taken by Government to stabilise the prices of gold and silver in the country *vis-a-vis* the international market to curb smuggling?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR): (a) to (c) the information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Modernisation of Calcutta Mint

4311. SHRIMATI CHANDRA KALA PANDEY:
SHRI NILOTPAL BASU:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether M/s. Micon, which was consultant for modernising the Calcutta Mint, suggested that three blanking lines and two buck furnances be installed in the Mint;

(b) if so, whether this has been implemented; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR): (a) to (c) The recommendation of M/s. MECON, who were project consultants for the Mint's modernisation project, have been implemented to the extent approved by the Government.

Autonomy to State Co-operative Banks in giving credits

4312. DR. D. VENKATESHWAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether NABARD plans to give the State Co-operative Banks autonomy in giving credits;

(b) if so, details thereof; and

(c) the advantage likely to be accrued by giving more autonomy to 360 district level Central Co-operative Banks?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR): (a) to (b) As reported by National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Develomment